HERMANN SONS LIFE CAMP
2027 PARENT HANDBOOK



A word from the Executive Director

Welcome to Hermann Sons Life Camp!

Dear Camp Families,

Welcome to Hermann Sons Life Camp and the summer of 2027!

My name is Steve Townley, and I am delighted to introduce myself as the new Executive Camp Director. It is both an honor and a privilege to join the Hermann Sons Life family and become part of a camp with such a rich history, wonderful traditions, and generations of campers who have called this special place their summer home.

I've spent much of my professional life working with children and young adults, both in education and in summer camping. Throughout those years, I've come to believe that there are few experiences as valuable to a child's development as attending overnight summer camp. Camp provides opportunities that simply cannot be duplicated in a classroom or at home. It's a place where children discover new interests, develop independence, build confidence, learn to work with others, and form friendships that can last a lifetime.

My goal is simple: I want the very best possible outcomes for every camper who joins us this summer.

Of course, I want your child to have fun! I want them to laugh, play, try new activities, and return home with wonderful stories to share. But I also want something more. I want every camper to leave Hermann Sons Life Camp having grown in some meaningful way. Perhaps they'll discover the courage to try something they never thought they could do. Maybe they'll make a new friend, overcome a challenge, or learn that they're capable of more than they imagined.

These are the experiences that make summer camp so special.

I also recognize the tremendous trust you place in us when you send your child to camp. As a parent, you want to know that your child is safe, cared for, included, and encouraged. I take that responsibility seriously, and I expect the same commitment from every member of our camp staff. We will work hard to create an environment where campers feel welcome, where traditions are celebrated, and where every child has the opportunity to succeed.

One of my priorities this summer is to strengthen the connection between camp and our families. I believe in open communication, and I want you to feel comfortable reaching out with questions, concerns, or simply to share something you think I should know about your child. You know your camper better than anyone, and that partnership is important to me.

You can reach me directly at:
Office: 830-995-3223
Cell: 903-353-4439
Email: camped@hermannsonslife.org

Dr. Steve Townley
Executive Camp Director
Hermann Sons Life Camp



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cabins, Counselors & Supervision 4

Cabin Assignments 5

Camp Map & Arrival Information 6

Risk Management & Emergency Procedures 7

Daily Schedule & Activities 8

Weekly Schedule & Themes 9

Our Three Pillars 10

Camp Traditions 11

Camp Recognition & Taps 12

Healthy Camp Practices 13

Packing Tips 14

Suggested Packing List 15

Dining at Camp 16

Arrival Day & Check-In 17

Departure Day & Check-Out 18

Medical Information 19

Camper Medications 20

Insurance & Medical Expenses 21

Staying in Touch 22

Homesickness 23

Helping Your Camper Succeed 24

Camper Code of Conduct 25

Summer Camp Rules 26

CIT Addendum 27

DORMS (CABINS)

All camper dorms (cabins) at Hermann Sons Life Camp are climate-controlled to provide a comfortable place for campers to rest and recharge. Campers stay in same-gender dorms that accommodate up to 35 campers and five counselors.

Counselors are assigned to live in the dorms with campers of the same gender. They sleep in the main dorm alongside campers but have separate shower and changing facilities within the building.

Counselors are present in the main dorm to provide supervision during rest and relaxation periods and throughout the evening. Campers are never left alone in the dorms without staff supervision.

DORM (CABIN) STAFF

At Hermann Sons Life Camp, the safety and well-being of our campers begin with a carefully selected and well-trained staff. Our camp follows both State of Texas and American Camp Association (ACA) staff-to-camper ratio requirements. Before the camp season begins, all staff members undergo criminal background checks, are personally interviewed by the Executive Camp Director, and have their names checked against the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW).

Staff preparation includes completing Expert Online Training before arriving at camp, followed by seven days of on-site staff development. All staff must also successfully complete a State of Texas-approved Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Training program (YS06-0007).

Each cabin is led by an experienced Lead Counselor who receives specialized training in caring for campers, creating a welcoming and supportive environment, and helping children learn to live and work together.

Our Head Boy Counselor and Head Girl Counselor are also members of the camp's leadership team and live in the cabins alongside campers and counselors. Their presence provides an additional level of care, guidance, and supervision throughout each session.

Together, our counseling team works to ensure that every camper feels safe, supported, included, and cared for while enjoying their camp experience.

GUESTS AND VISITORS

To maintain a safe, secure, and consistent camp environment, we do not allow visits from guests, friends, or family members while camp sessions are in progress.

RULE OF THREE AND ACTIVE SUPERVISION

The safety and well-being of our campers are always our highest priorities. One of the ways we maintain a safe and supportive environment is through our **Rule of Three**, which means counselors and campers may never be alone together in a cabin or another private, secluded setting. Interactions between staff and campers must take place in areas where others can see them.

This policy does not prevent counselors from providing individual care and attention when a camper needs it. A counselor may walk a camper to the clinic or take time to have a personal conversation with a child who needs encouragement or support. When a more personal conversation is needed, counselors may use a cabin porch or another visible location where the camper can speak comfortably while appropriate supervision is maintained.

Throughout each session, members of our senior leadership team may also meet with campers without their regular cabin counselors present. These conversations give campers an opportunity to share what they enjoy about camp, talk about their experiences, and offer suggestions about activities, schedules, and cabin life.

We value our campers' honest feedback. Their ideas help us improve our program, recognize counselors who make a positive difference, and ensure that camp continues to be a place where children feel heard and valued. Camper feedback also plays an important role in staff evaluations and our Counselor of the Session recognition.

At Hermann Sons Life Camp, we practice **Active Supervision**. This means our counselors do much more than simply watch over campers. They take an active role in the campers' daily experiences by getting to know each child, listening to their stories, encouraging participation, and helping them navigate new experiences and friendships.

We want every camper to feel seen, heard, valued, and included. We believe these everyday interactions build trust, create a strong sense of belonging, and help create the meaningful friendships and lifelong memories that make summer camp so special.



BUNKING – What cabin am I in?

Our goal when assigning campers to cabins is to create a welcoming, comfortable, and enjoyable camp experience for every child. We know that sharing a cabin with a friend can make coming to camp even more exciting, especially for first-time campers!

During registration, parents and guardians will have the opportunity to complete a Cabin Request Form, letting us know if their camper would like to share a cabin with a particular friend or friends. You may also indicate whether your child prefers a top or bottom bunk.

We make every effort to honor these requests, but cabin assignments and bunk preferences cannot be guaranteed.

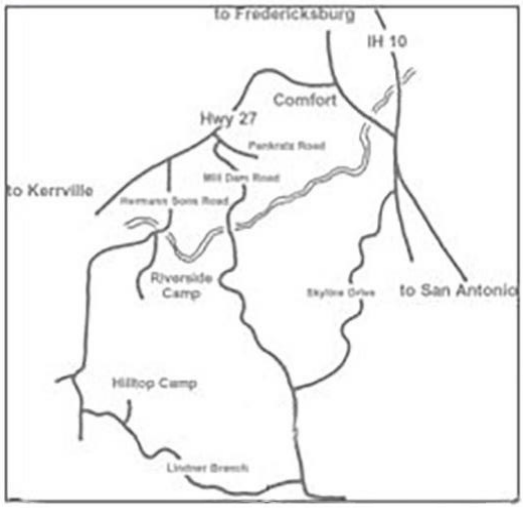
Helping campers stay with their friends is a high priority for us. At the same time, we want every child to have the opportunity to make new friends, feel included, and enjoy the full camp experience. With that in mind, we follow a few guidelines when making cabin assignments.

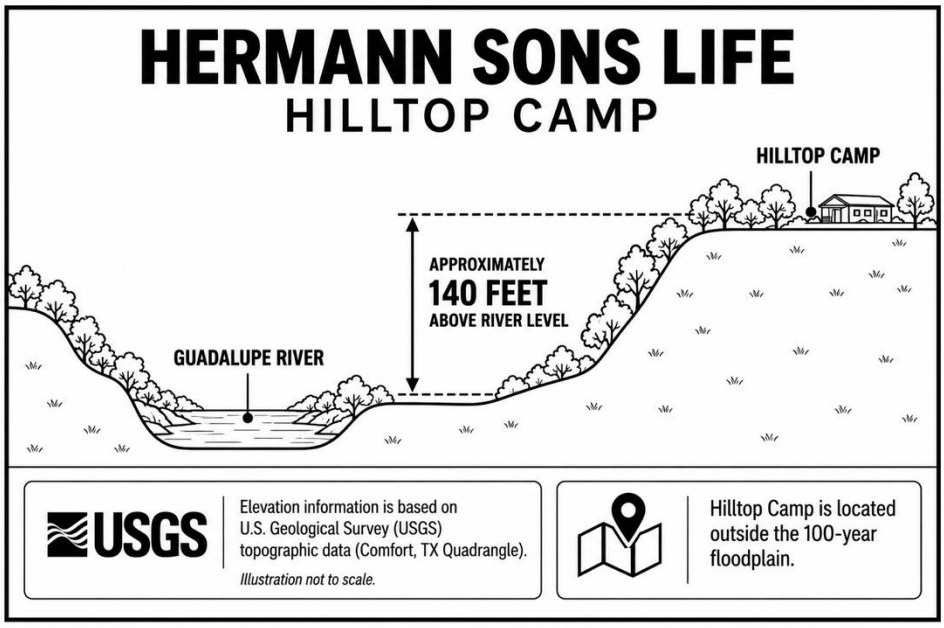
- Age-Appropriate Cabins: Whenever possible, we place campers within two years of age of one another. We believe that sharing a cabin with campers of similar ages helps children build friendships, connect through shared interests, and enjoy an experience suited to their stage of development. Age-appropriate placement takes priority over requests for a particular cabin or cabinmates.

- Friend Requests: We allow groups of up to four friends to share the same age-appropriate cabin. This helps us balance existing friendships with opportunities for campers to meet new people and become part of their cabin community.

- Bunk Preferences: While we welcome requests for top or bottom bunks, specific bed assignments cannot be guaranteed. Campers will be assigned beds throughout their cabin.

We put a great deal of thought and care into cabin assignments because we know that cabin life is one of the most memorable parts of summer camp. Our hope is that every camper arrives feeling welcome, quickly finds a place to belong, and leaves camp with even more friends than they came with!





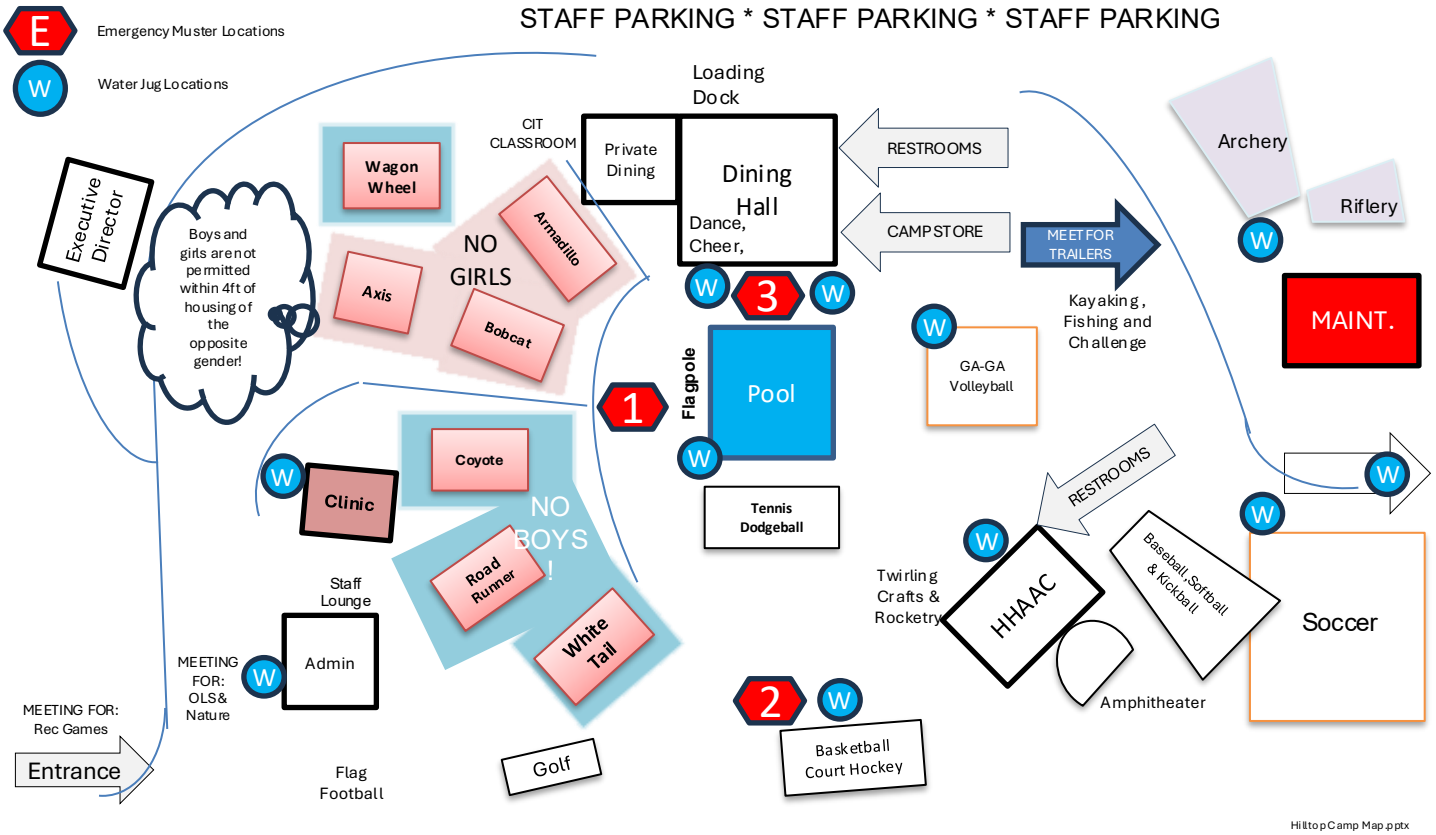
ADDRESS

170 Hilltop Camp Road, Comfort, TX 78013
GPS Will get you to Hermann Sons Road. Then:

DIRECTIONS TO CAMP

From Comfort take Hwy. 27 west toward Kerrville. Just outside of Comfort, turn left on Hermann Sons Road. Don't turn left on Altenheim. There is no access to Hilltop Camp. Drive an additional 1.5 miles, turn left on Lindner Branch, drive half a mile, then turn left on Hilltop Camp Road.

HERMANN SONS LIFE CAMP



RISK MANAGEMENT is the term that describes the constant effort to make our camp program safer and to help the staff understand their vital role in this process. Better training, better supervision, more anticipation, and clearer foresight – that's what risk management is all about.

Risk is an inherent part of our work. Interactions with the natural and manmade environment coupled with the involvement of young people in various activities presents the potential for accidental injury. We can never eliminate risk, but we can manage it.

Annual Pre-Camp Risk Management

- AC Equipment checks
- Kitchen equipment checks
- Fire extinguisher checks
- Vehicle & Trailer checks
- Challenge Course inspection
- Tree Inspections
- Pest control service
- Review of Emergency Procedures
- Risk Assessment visit
- Insurance coverage
- Staff Development review
- Lifeguard training
- Challenge Course Training
- Site/ facility walk through
- Activity equipment purchasing
- Texas Camp Regulations review
- ACA Regulations review
- Camp Policies and Procedures review

Staffing of Camp

- NSOPW
- Reference checks
- Criminal background checks
- Pre-camp online training through Expert Online Training
- Pre-camp staff Zooms
- Interviews with Director
- Seven-day staff development
- Lifeguard and Challenge Course Certifications
- Cross-training staff
- Annual review of staff manuals
- Emergency procedures training

Dorm Safety

- Active supervision
- Annual maintenance
- No bullying
- No rough housing
- Limit the number of campers on beds
- Healthy campers
- Cleanliness
- Saturday Checklist
- Code of Conduct enforced
- Medication control
- No food in cabins
- Proper clothing/attire
- Rule of three enforced

Activity Safety

- Activity rules enforced
- Proper staff training
- Water breaks
- Supervising campers at all times.
- No early activity releases
- Daily and weekly facility and equipment checks

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES It is important for our parents to understand the policies and procedures in place when it comes to inclement weather amongst other emergencies that may occur during the summer. Below is a link to our Emergency Procedures. These have been reviewed and approved by the State of Texas.

https://hermannsonslife.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/2026-Emergency-Procedures-10-25-25.pdf

- Adventures in Nature
- Archery
- Baseball
- Basketball
- Canoeing & Kayaking
- Challenge Course
- Cheerleading
- Climbing
- Court Hockey
- Dance
- Drama
- Fishing
- Flag Football
- Free Swim
- Ga-Ga
- Golf
- Outdoor Living Skills
- Rec Games
- Riflery
- Rocketry
- Sand Volleyball
- Soccer
- Softball
- Tennis
- Tumbling
- Twirling

DAILY SCHEDULE

Every day at Hermann Sons Life Camp is filled with adventure, friendship, and opportunities to try something new!

Our mornings begin with music to wake up our campers and get everyone ready for the day. After breakfast, campers return to their dorms for cabin clean-up. Everyone is expected to help keep their living areas clean and organized.

Campers then gather at the flagpole for our morning flag-raising ceremony before heading off to their three scheduled morning activities. These activities take place Monday through Thursday.

After lunch, campers have the opportunity to choose two afternoon activities from a changing selection of electives. Activity options are announced each day at lunch, giving campers the freedom to explore new interests or return to activities they particularly enjoy.

Following dinner, everyone gathers at the flagpole for our popular evening program, featuring special activities, games, and camp traditions.

We end each day together as a cabin with Grateful Circles and Taps, giving campers an opportunity to reflect on their experiences and friendships. Campers then return to their dorms for showers, stories, and lights out, ready for another exciting day!

MORNING ACTIVITIES

Each camper participates in three scheduled morning activities, Monday through Thursday.

Before arriving at camp, families will select **six preferred activities through CampBrain**. From those choices, three activities will be assigned to your camper.

Our goal is to place every camper in their top three choices whenever possible. This allows campers to spend time developing skills and exploring activities that interest them most.

AFTERNOON ELECTIVES

Afternoons are all about choice! In addition to their scheduled morning activities, campers select two afternoon electives each day.

A changing list of activities is shared at lunch, allowing campers to plan their afternoon based on their interests. Some activities traditionally offered as scheduled morning classes are now available as afternoon electives, giving campers even more flexibility. These may include camp crafts such as lanyards, friendship bracelets, and beading, as well as ceramics, leathercrafts, free swim, yoga, archery, and Ga-Ga.

Campers can also choose from a wide variety of other exciting activities, including:

Sports and Games: Capture the Flag, dodgeball, Ultimate Frisbee, Ga-Ga, Gaelic football, netball, cricket, and golf.

Arts and Creativity: Mosaics, tie-dye, improv classes, line dancing, color guard (flags), and manicures and pedicures.

Outdoor Adventures: Hiking, fishing, kayaking, zip line, giant swing, climbing, and scavenger hunts.

Special Interests: Magic: The Gathering, martial arts, and other special activities offered throughout the week.

Popular activities will be offered during every elective period, while others may be available once or twice during the week.

Our goal is to give campers a wonderful balance of familiar favorites and exciting new experiences. Whether they're trying something for the first time, developing a new skill, or simply having fun with friends, **every camper has the opportunity to make their camp experience their own!**

HERMANN SONS LIFE CAMP DAILY SCHEDULE

2027 Themes

#1 – Medieval Life
#2 – Marvel and Disney
#3 – Texas Week
#4 – Red, White & Blue
#5 – Holidays in July
#6 – Decades (50s-90s)

2027 Nightly Activities

SUNDAY
Pool, Ga-Ga, Kickball
Campfire w/S'mores

MONDAY
The BIG BROWN BAG

TUESDAY
GAME NIGHT

WEDS
Capture the FLAG & POOL PARTY

THURS
THE DANCE

FRIDAY
Banquet Night
Award Ceremony

FANCY FRIDAY

- Late Wake Up
- Activity Finals and Performances
- Redneck Waterpark
- Fancy Dress Up or Hawaiian shirt Banquet
- Weekly Slide Show
- Awards

Monday through Thursday

Time Start	Time End	Activity
7:00 a.m.	7:25 a.m.	Wake-Up
7:30 a.m.	8:25 a.m	Breakfast
8:30 a.m.	8:50 a.m.	Clean for Ice Cream
8:50 a.m.	9:00 a.m	Flagpole
9:00 a.m	10:00 a.m.	Activity Period #1
10:05 a.m.	11:05 a.m.	Activity Period #2
11:05 a.m	11:15 a.m	Punch Break
11:15 a.m.	12:15 p.m.	Activity Period #3
12:15 p.m.	12:25 p.m.	Cabin Time
12:30 p.m.	1:10 p.m.	Relaxation / Canteen for WT, C, BC
12:30 p.m.	1:10 p m	Lunch for A, RR
1:15 p.m	2:00 p.m.	Relaxation / Canteen fo A, RR
1:15 p.m.	2:00 p.m.	Lunch for WT, C, BC
2:00 p.m.	3:00 p.m.	REST PERIOD
3:00 p.m	3:10 p.m	Flagpole
3:10 p.m	4:00 p.m.	ELECTIVE #1
4:00 p.m	4:15 p.m.	Snack Break
4:15 p.m.	5:15 p.m.	ELECTIVE #2
5:15 p.m.	5:35 p.m.	Cabin Time
5:40 p.m	6:30 p.m.	Dinner
6:30 p.m.	7:00 p.m.	Cabin Time
7:00 p.m	7:15 p.m.	Flagpole
7:15 p.m	8:45 p.m	Evening Activity
8:45 p.m.	9:00 p.m.	Snack Break
9:00 p.m.	9:15 p.m	Grateful Circles
9:15 p.m.	10:15 p.m	Showers
10:15 p.m.		Lights-Out

FRIDAY

Time Start	Time End	Activity
7:00 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	Early Risers Plunge
8:00 a.m.	8:30 a.m	Wake-Up
8:30 a.m.	9:15 a.m.	Breakfast
9:15 a.m.	9:30 a.m	Flagpole
9:30 a.m	12:00 p.m.	**Activity Finals and Performances**
12:00 p.m.	12:30 a.m.	Cabin Time
12:30 a.m	1:15 p.m	Lunch – Open Seating
1:15 a.m.	2:15 p.m.	Rest Period
3:35 p.m.	5:35 p.m.	Redneck Waterpark
5:40 p.m.		See Above

WHAT MAKES HERMANN SONS LIFE CAMP A HOME AWAY FROM HOME?

At Hermann Sons Life Camp, we believe summer camp is about much more than having fun. It's about discovering new abilities, building meaningful friendships, gaining independence, and becoming part of something special.
Our camp experience is built around **three important pillars: Adventure, Friends & Belonging, and Camp Spirit.** Together, they shape our activities, traditions, and the way we care for every camper.

ADVENTURE: DISCOVER WHAT YOU CAN DO!

Adventure is about more than climbing a wall, riding a zip line, or exploring the outdoors. It's about trying something new, stepping outside your comfort zone, and discovering that you're capable of more than you imagined.
At Hermann Sons Life Camp, we encourage campers to explore new interests, develop skills, overcome challenges, and celebrate their accomplishments. Sometimes adventure means trying an unfamiliar activity. Other times, it means finding the courage to introduce yourself to someone new or giving something another try after it didn't go quite as planned.
Every camper's adventure is different, and every accomplishment matters.

FRIENDS & BELONGING: FIND YOUR PLACE!

One of the greatest gifts of summer camp is friendship. Camp brings together children from different backgrounds and communities, giving them opportunities to make new friends, learn from one another, and discover what it means to be part of a group.
Living together in a cabin, sharing responsibilities, encouraging one another, and working through everyday challenges help campers develop cooperation, patience, empathy, and independence.
Our counselors work hard to create a welcoming environment where every camper feels included, valued, and supported.
Whether a camper arrives knowing everyone or no one, our goal is for them to leave knowing they belong.

CAMP SPIRIT: BECOME PART OF THE TRADITION!

At Hermann Sons Life Camp, traditions connect generations of campers. It's not unusual to welcome children whose parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles all attended camp before them!
Many of our counselors were once campers themselves, returning year after year because of the friendships, memories, and experiences that made camp such an important part of their lives.
Camp Spirit is found in the songs we sing, the games we play, the traditions we celebrate, and the pride campers feel in being part of the Hermann Sons Life family.
We treasure our traditions while welcoming new campers, staff, and ideas that help our camp continue to grow.
Whether it's your child's first summer or their sixth, they're becoming part of a camp family that spans generations.



OUR CAMP TRADITIONS

Our traditions bring the three pillars of camp to life. Some encourage campers to try something new, others bring cabins together as a team, and many connect today's campers with generations who came before them.

WE SING!

Singing camp songs throughout the day is one of our favorite traditions! Whether we're gathered for a meal, walking to an activity, or celebrating together, music is part of the Hermann Sons Life Camp experience.
Thanks to Pamela Nentwich, videos of many of our camp songs are available on our official YouTube channel. We encourage both new and returning campers to learn a few favorites before arriving.
Visit our Hermann Sons Life YouTube Channel to start singing along!

WE DANCE (AND EAT COOKIES!)

Our Thursday night dance is one of the highlights of every camp session!
With help from returning staff members, we've created video tutorials featuring some of our most popular line dances. Campers can practice at home or learn alongside their new friends.
We even play favorite dance songs during meals, and it's not unusual for counselors to get up and dance with campers joining in!
For some campers, joining a dance for the first time is a little adventure of its own. For others, it's a favorite tradition they look forward to all year.
Of course, some campers will tell you that the best part of Thursday night's dance isn't the dancing at all. **It's the cookies!**
Find our dance tutorials on the Hermann Sons Life YouTube Channel.

CLEAN FOR ICE CREAM!

Learning to live together and share responsibilities is an important part of camp life. Every camper helps keep their cabin clean and comfortable.
Daily responsibilities include making beds, sweeping floors, taking out the trash, and keeping personal belongings organized.
To make cabin clean-up a little more exciting, we have our **Clean for Ice Cream** tradition!
Each day, the cleanest cabin earns the coveted **Golden Broom Award**. On Friday, the cleanest cabins are rewarded with ice cream sandwiches at lunch!
Beyond the friendly competition, campers learn that everyone has a role to play in caring for their cabin community. Working together, sharing responsibilities, and celebrating group accomplishments are all part of learning to belong.

FLAGPOLE TRADITIONS

Each morning and afternoon, campers and staff gather at the flagpole for one of our longstanding camp traditions.
Together, we raise and lower the American flag, the Texas state flag, and the Hermann Sons Life flag.
During our morning ceremony, we also recite the Pledge of Allegiance and the Texas Pledge.
Participation in the pledges is not required, but all campers and staff are expected to show respect during the ceremonies by standing quietly, facing the flags, and removing their hats.
These gatherings remind us that while each camper brings their own personality and experiences to camp, we are all part of one camp community.

REST AND RELAXATION

With so many exciting activities throughout the day, everyone needs time to recharge!
Following lunch, campers return to their cabins for a scheduled rest period. All campers are expected to rest quietly on their beds. Those who prefer to read during this time are welcome to do so.
We also establish age-appropriate bedtimes to ensure campers get the rest they need.
Campers ages 11 and younger: In bed no later than 10:00 p.m.
Campers ages 12–14 and older: In bed no later than 10:30 p.m.
Learning to respect quiet time, care for personal needs, and consider the comfort of cabinmates is another important part of living together at camp.

MORE THAN A WEEK AT CAMP

Adventure helps campers discover what they're capable of. Friends and Belonging teach them how to connect with others and become part of a community. Camp Spirit gives them traditions, memories, and a sense of pride in something larger than themselves.
Together, these three pillars help make Hermann Sons Life Camp a home away from home, a place where children can grow, friendships can flourish, and memories can last a lifetime.

TAPS

Each night, following the evening activity, each camp gathers and taps is performed. It's an awesome way of calming the campers down before heading back to the dorms for the friendship circles, showers and bed. At the end of Taps, the Lord's Prayer is said. Much like the Pledge of Allegiance,- campers are not required to sing Taps or say the Lord's Prayer, however, they are expected to be respectful for those who do.

GRATEFUL (FRIENDSHIP) CIRCLES / LIGHTS-OUT

After Taps we head back to the dorms. Before entering the dorm, we gather in a circle (or small circles) and say one thing we are grateful for from the day.

CAMPER OF THE DAY

Every day (at lunch) we will be announcing the "Camper of the Day" for each dorm. We are looking for the most deserving, most helpful, friendliest camper who embodies all aspects of camp. This camper will be acknowledged at one of the meals. These campers will be given the opportunity to lower the flag each evening.

CAMPER OF THE WEEK

Each week we will be announcing a "Camper of the Week" for each dorm. We are looking for the most deserving, the friendliest campers, the most helpful, kindest, etc. This camper will be acknowledged at the Friday Showcase and awarded a special orange bead.



A HEALTHY CAMP BEGINS AND ENDS AT HOME

The American Camp Association along with the Association of Camp Nursing has prepared a document for parents to use to help keep summer camps healthy and happy places. This is a summary of that document.

- If your child is showing signs of illness such as running a temperature, throwing up, has diarrhea, nasal drainage and/or coughing/sneezing, keep the child home and contact your camp director. This greatly reduces the spread of illness at camp but also supports your child's recovery.
- Teach your child to sneeze/cough in his/her sleeve and to wash his/her hands often while at camp, especially before eating and after using the restroom. If you really want to achieve impact, teach your child to accompany hand washing with another behavior: keeping their hands away from their face.
- If your child has mental, emotional, or social health challenges, talk with a camp representative before camp starts. Proactively discussing a camp's ability to accommodate a child can help minimize - if not eliminate - potential problems.
- Make sure your child has and wears appropriate close-toed shoes for activities such as soccer and hiking, and that your child understands that camp is a more rugged environment than the suburban setting. Talk with your child about wearing appropriate shoes to avoid slips, trips and falls that, in turn, can result in injuries such as a sprained ankle.
- Fatigue plays a part in both injuries and illnesses - and camp is a very busy place! Explain that camp is not like a sleepover: they need to sleep, not stay up all night!
- Remember to send sunscreen that your child has tried at home. Teach your child how to apply his/her sunscreen and how often to do so.
- Impress upon your child the importance of staying hydrated.
- Talk with your child about telling their counselor, the nurse or camp director about problems or things that are troublesome to them at camp. These camp professionals can be quite helpful as children learn to handle being lonesome for home or cope with things such as losing something special. These helpers can't be helpful if they don't know about the problem - so talk to them.
- Should something come up during the camp experience or afterward - you see an unusual rash on your child or the child shares a disturbing story – contact the camp's representative and let them know. Camps want to partner effectively with parents; sharing information makes this possible.



PACKING LIST – SUGGESTIONS AND TIPS

Many of the things your camper will need are already around the house. There's no need to go out and purchase brand new equipment/supplies.

Pack bedding (sleeping bag or linens, pillow, blanket, etc.) in a large trash bag with the camper's name on the bag. This way, all bedding stays together and gets to the correct cabin.

Camp can be messy. Cabins tend to become messy, and campers often say, "I can't find my shirt!" For those less-than-organized campers, we suggest packing a day's worth of clothes in a zip-lock bag (the gallon size works great). Each morning, your camper can reach into their luggage/bag and pull out an entire outfit. Extra socks, shirts, etc., can be put in other zip-lock bags and labeled. This system works well for campers of all ages.

Safety at camp continues to be our number one priority. To avoid temporary confiscation of undesirables, we ask that parents/guardians please examine your child's belongings prior to their arrival at camp. We thank you for your assistance and understanding.

- No expensive clothing you don't want ruined
- Valuable jewelry
- MP3 players/iPods/iPads
- Cell phones and digital cameras
- Pocket knives or weapons of any kind
- No fireworks, sparklers, etc.

LOST AND FOUND

To ensure items are not lost, please label every item your child brings or wears to camp. All lost and found items will be avail- able for claim at the Hermann Sons Life Camp Administration building in Comfort, TX until August 31, 2027. Please contact Steve Townley at 830-995-3223 to arrange for pick-up and/or de- livery at the owner's expense. Unclaimed items will be donated to local non-profit organizations.

DRESS CODE

Hermann Sons Life encourages parents to help us in having all youth adhere to the camp dress code. Items not allowed: tops with spaghetti straps, halter-type tops, string bikinis, men's



speedo-type swimsuits or shorts, shirts that reveal the midriff, excessively loose-fitting pants or jeans, short shorts or skirts, clothing advertising or referencing alcohol, drugs, violence, or having sexual content. Two-piece swimsuits are allowed but should adequately cover all body parts.

Footwear: Campers are to wear athletic, tennis-type or Croc- style shoes to camp activities. Closed-toe shoes are required for challenge course, OLS, archery, and rifle activities.

Campers are advised to bring water shoes or Teva-type sandals that can be worn into the river. These shoes will become wet and/or muddy.

Campers may NOT wear flip-flops or other types of backless sandals any time other than when they are in the cabins.

Staff may instruct a youth to return to their cabin and change their clothing if any item is not within the guidelines or appro- priate for the activity.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

To help maintain a safe and secure camp environment, Hermann Sons Life Camp reserves the right to inspect the personal belongings of campers and staff members when necessary. Inspections may take place with or without prior notice and do not require a specific reason or concern.

Campers are expected to cooperate with these inspections. A camper who refuses to allow an inspection may be required to leave camp.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

CLOTHING

- ☐ 6 each of shirts, shorts, socks and underwear
- ☐ 2 Swimsuits
- ☐ Pajamas
- ☐ Tennis shoes
- ☐ Shower shoes
- ☐ Athletic Tennis-type shoes
- ☐ Flip-flops or sandals (for cabin use)
- ☐ Water shoes
- ☐ 1 pair of jeans
- ☐ Hat or cap
- ☐ Something to wear to the Camp dance

LINENS

- ☐ Twin-size fitted sheet
- ☐ Pillow with case
- ☐ Blanket or sleeping bag
- ☐ 2 towels and wash cloths
- ☐ Swim towel

OTHER NECESSITIES

- ☐ Laundry bag for dirty clothes
- ☐ Toiletry Bag (soap, shampoo, toothbrush and toothpaste, hair brush or comb, deodorant, lip balm, feminine products, etc.)
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Bug repellent
- ☐ Water bottle (labelled)
- ☐ Rain gear (poncho or coat)
- ☐ Medications * Please do not pack any medications In your child's luggage. It must be given to the medical staff upon arrival.

OPTIONAL

- ☐ Flashlight
- ☐ Stuffed animal
- ☐ Reading book
- ☐ Letter writing materials with pre-addressed stamped envelopes.
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Attire for themed week

PLEASE NOTE

- ☐ Camp provides all sporting equipment.
- ☐ We recommend spare glasses or contacts be given to the medical staff upon arrival for safe keeping.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING

Any electronics (music players, iPads, cell phones, cameras, smart watches, etc.) Expensive/valuable clothing or jewelry, pocket knives or weapons of any kind, fireworks, sparklers, etc.

DINING AT CAMP



SNACKS

Camp provides 3 meals and 2 snacks daily. In addition we always have whole fruit available in the dining hall. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND SNACKS** with your child. All food items will be confiscated (and not returned). Dorms are snack-free zones to eliminate the small critters from the dorms.

THE KITCHEN

All kitchen staff have ServSafe food handling certifications. Safe food handling to prevent cross-contamination, proper hygiene for all staff, acceptable cooking practices and correct cleaning and sanitation are must-dos for any kitchen.

MEAL PROCEDURES

- Campers and counselors will wash their hands before being called to the Dining Hall.
- We serve cafeteria style & campers sit by dorm!
- We offer one main entrée and sides per meal. While we do not provide for special diets (including vegetarian) each lunch and dinner a complete salad bar is provided.
- Parents of campers that require special diets are encouraged to call Executive Camp Director Steve Townley at 830-995-2233 to discuss options.

THE TABLE

- Each dorm will have a cleaning cart wheeled out to their tables during the meal.
- This cart will contain:
  - a bucket for waste and scraper,
  - a bucket with hot soapy water and a couple of sponges,
  - a bucket with sanitizer solution and scrapers,
  - a bus tub.
- Once the dorm has finished the meal, the campers will scrape excess food into the bucket and wipe down their part of the table using the hot soapy water.
- One counselor will then collect the plates, silverware and cups and place them in the bus tub.
- Once the table is clean, the campers and most of the counselors will return to their dorm.
- One counselor and CIT remain behind to sanitize the table and benches and sweep the floor.

ARRIVAL DAY AND CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

We can't wait to welcome your family to Hermann Sons Life Camp! Arrival day is an exciting time for campers and parents alike. Our check-in process is designed to give families an opportunity to explore camp, meet their child's counselors, and help their camper settle into their home away from home.

Before You Arrive

Prior to your camper's scheduled arrival, you will receive an email from camp with important check-in information, including your child's assigned dorm (cabin) and the schedule for dorm check-in.

Please make sure you have completed your camper's Health Form before arriving at camp. Completing this information in advance will help make the check-in process quicker and easier for everyone.

Arriving at Camp

Official check-in begins at **1:30 p.m.**, but families are welcome to arrive as early as **12:00 noon**.
We encourage you to take advantage of this extra time to enjoy the campgrounds together! Bring a picnic lunch, take a walk around camp, explore the grounds, and help your camper become familiar with their surroundings. The Camp Store, located in the Administration Building, will also be open for families who would like to do a little shopping.
Please remember that **campers may not move into their assigned dorms until they have completed the check-in process at the Dining Hall.**

Checking In at the Dining Hall

When it is time for your camper to check in, please proceed to the Dining Hall. Our staff will guide you through the process, which includes:
Reviewing required forms and important camper information.
Completing a camper health check.
Visiting the Camp Store table.
Once these steps are complete, your camper will be ready to move into their assigned dorm!

Moving Into the Dorm (Cabin)

After completing check-in, parents and guardians are welcome to accompany their camper to their assigned dorm. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet your child's counselors, see where your camper will be staying, and help them get settled.
You're even welcome to help your camper make their bed, organize their belongings, and get comfortable in their new surroundings. Don't forget to take a few pictures and enjoy those last-minute hugs!
We believe that giving families this opportunity to experience their child's cabin and meet the staff helps build confidence and makes the transition to camp a little easier for everyone.

Saying Goodbye

Once your camper is settled into their dorm and you've had an opportunity to meet the cabin staff, we ask that families say their goodbyes and depart shortly afterward.
While goodbyes can sometimes be difficult, a positive and timely farewell helps campers begin adjusting to their new surroundings, make friends, and become part of their cabin community. Our counselors will be ready to welcome your camper, help them feel included, and get them started on a wonderful week of camp!

A Few Important Arrival Day Reminders

Trailers and RVs: Unfortunately, our regular parking areas cannot accommodate trailers or recreational vehicles. Please plan to arrive in a standard passenger vehicle.
Pets: Please leave your pets at home. We cannot accommodate family pets on arrival day.
Health Forms: Complete your camper's Health Form before arriving at camp.
Dorm Check-In: Please follow the assigned check-in schedule provided in your pre-arrival email.
Departure: Once your camper is settled, please help us get the camp experience started by saying your goodbyes and allowing them to begin their adventure.
We look forward to welcoming your family to Hermann Sons Life Camp and helping your camper begin a week filled with adventure, new friendships, and unforgettable memories!

DEPARTURE DAY AND CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES

Saturdays are departure days at Hermann Sons Life Camp! After a wonderful week of adventure, friendships, and camp memories, it's time to welcome families back to camp and celebrate everything our campers have experienced. Our departure day schedule includes a special closing ceremony, time to celebrate camper accomplishments, and an organized check-out process to help everyone head home safely.

Arriving at Camp

The front gate will open at **9:00 a.m.** Please plan your arrival accordingly, as families will not be admitted before this time.

When you arrive, parents, guardians, or other individuals authorized to pick up a camper must check in at the front gate and present a valid photo ID.

After verifying your identity and authorization, our staff will issue a visitor badge displaying your name and the name of the camper you are picking up.

For the safety of all campers, only authorized individuals wearing an issued visitor badge will be permitted to check out a camper.

Closing Ceremony and Beading Ceremony (9:30–10:00 a.m.)

One of our favorite camp traditions is celebrating our campers and their accomplishments at the end of each session! Families are invited to join us at the **Houston Home Association Activity Center (HAAC)** from **9:30 to 10:00 a.m.** for our Closing Ceremony and Beading Ceremony.

This is a special opportunity to celebrate the friendships, experiences, and achievements that have made the week memorable. We encourage families to attend and share in this important camp tradition.

Checking Out at the Dining Hall (10:00–11:00 a.m.)

Following the closing ceremony, camper check-out begins at **10:00 a.m.** at the Dining Hall.

Parents and authorized individuals should visit the Dining Hall before proceeding to their camper's cabin. During this stop, you will have an opportunity to:

Pick up any medications brought to camp for your camper.

Check the Lost and Found for any belongings your camper may have misplaced during the week.

Picking Up Your Camper at the Dorm (Cabin)

After visiting the Dining Hall, please proceed to your camper's assigned dorm.

Your camper and their luggage will be waiting for you on the cabin porch. Before leaving, you must **officially sign your camper out with their cabin counselor**.

This final step is an important part of our camper safety procedures and ensures that every child leaves camp with an authorized adult.

All campers must be checked out by 11:00 a.m.

Running Late?

We understand that unexpected delays can happen. If you anticipate arriving late for camper pick-up, please contact Executive Camp Director Steve Townley at **903-353-4439** as soon as possible so we can make appropriate arrangements for your camper.

A Few Important Departure Day Reminders

Gate Opening: The front gate opens at 9:00 a.m. No early entry.

Photo Identification: All individuals picking up campers must present a valid photo ID and receive a visitor badge.

Closing Ceremony: Join us from 9:30 to 10:00 a.m. at the HAAC.

Dining Hall Check-Out: Beginning at 10:00 a.m., collect medications and check Lost and Found.

Cabin Pick-Up: Pick up your camper and luggage at the cabin porch and sign out with the counselor.

Departure Deadline: All campers must be checked out by 11:00 a.m.

Thank you for sharing your camper with us this summer! We hope they return home with wonderful stories, new friendships, a little more confidence, and memories that will last a lifetime. We look forward to welcoming them back for another adventure at Hermann Sons Life Camp!

IMPORTANT MEDICAL INFORMATION

At Hermann Sons Life Camp, the health, safety, and well-being of our campers are among our highest priorities. Our medical staff is here to provide care, support, and reassurance when campers aren't feeling their best. We also believe in keeping parents informed whenever their child needs medical attention.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

We understand how important it is for parents to know when their child is sick or injured. Our camp follows established communication procedures to ensure families receive timely information about their camper's health.

- **Doctor Visits:** Parents or guardians will be contacted by the camp nurse before their child is seen by a doctor for an illness or injury.
- **Clinic Stays:** If a camper needs to lie down and rest in the Clinic, parents will be notified, even if the stay is less than four hours.
- **Overnight Clinic Stays:** If a camper is admitted to the Clinic after 9:00 p.m. for a non-emergency condition, the camp nurse may contact parents the following morning between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. Parents will be contacted no later than 8:30 a.m.

Our goal is to keep families informed while allowing our medical staff to provide the care and attention each camper needs.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In the event of a serious illness, injury, or medical emergency, parents or guardians will be notified.
If a family emergency arises at home and you need to contact your camper, please call or text **Executive Camp Director Steve Townley at 903-353-4439**.

CAMP CLINIC AND MEDICAL CARE

Our camp's health care policies and procedures are designed to protect the health and safety of campers and staff while helping everyone participate as fully as possible in camp activities.
Medical care is provided by a licensed nurse or Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). If a camper requires medical evaluation or treatment beyond what our camp Clinic can provide, they will be referred to an appropriate medical facility or their personal physician.

Protecting Your Camper's Medical Information

We respect the privacy of every camper and take precautions to protect personal medical information. Hermann Sons Life Camp recognizes the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and copies of the law are posted in accessible areas.
Medical information is treated confidentially and shared with cabin counselors or activity instructors only when necessary to support a camper's health, safety, or participation in activities. When information must be shared, we use a simple coding system to provide an additional level of confidentiality.

Required Health Forms

All campers and staff must have a completed Health History Form on file.
Parents should complete their camper's Health History Form before arriving at camp to help ensure a smooth check-in process and allow our medical team to prepare for any individual health needs.





CAMPER MEDICATIONS

If your camper will need medication during their stay, including prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, vitamins, creams, or ointments, please review the following procedures carefully.

Medication Storage and Administration

For camper safety, all medications, including vitamins, aspirin, allergy medications, and other over-the-counter products, must be stored in the camp Clinic.

Campers may not keep medications in their dorms (cabins).

The only exceptions are campers who are required to carry an epinephrine auto-injector or an inhaler for emergency use.

Preparing Medications for Camp

All medications will be collected by our medical staff during arrival day check-in.
Please follow these steps when preparing your camper's medications:

1. **Keep medications in their original containers.** Prescription medications must remain in their original pharmacy-labeled bottles. Over-the-counter medications and vitamins must remain in their original packaging. Pill organizers are not permitted.
2. **Place all medications in a large Ziploc bag.** This helps our medical staff organize and review your camper's medications during check-in.
3. **Make sure medications are properly labeled.** Prescription medication labels must include your camper's name, medication name, dispensing instructions, and prescribing physician's name.
4. **Provide complete medication instructions.** All medications, prescription and non-prescription, must be clearly identified with the camper's name, medication name, dosage, administration time, number of doses per day, and any special instructions, such as refrigeration.
5. **Bring a completed Camper Medication Form.** This form must accompany any medications brought to camp.
6. **Send enough medication for the entire session.** Parents are responsible for ensuring their camper has an adequate supply of prescribed medications for their full stay.

Over-the-Counter Medications

Our camp Clinic is stocked with commonly used over-the-counter medications. These medications are available when needed and are administered by our medical staff according to established dispensing instructions.

IMPORTANT MEDICATION REMINDER

ALL MEDICATIONS MUST BE BROUGHT TO CAMP IN THEIR ORIGINAL, PROPERLY LABELED CONTAINERS OR PACKAGING.
Please do not send medications in pill organizers, unmarked containers, or individual bags without their original labels.
Thank you for helping our medical team provide safe, consistent, and attentive care for every camper. By completing the required forms and preparing medications properly, you help us make sure your child has a healthy, safe, and enjoyable camp experience.

INSURANCE AND MEDICAL EXPENSES

Hermann Sons Life provides medical insurance coverage in the event a camper experiences an accident or injury while attending Hermann Sons Life Camp.

Please note that this coverage does not include sickness or illness. Any medical expenses related to sickness or illness are the responsibility of the camper's parent or guardian.

To ensure we have the information needed should medical care be necessary, parents must provide their child's Social Security number, medical insurance provider, and insurance policy number on the Health History Form.

SICK CALL AND CLINIC HOURS

Our camp Clinic is available **24 hours a day, seven days a week**, and campers are always welcome to seek medical attention whenever they are feeling sick or need assistance.

To help campers enjoy their daily activities with as few interruptions as possible, we encourage those experiencing minor, non-urgent health concerns to visit the Clinic during our regularly scheduled Sick Call times:

After breakfast

After lunch

After dinner

Evening Sick Call, 9:00–10:00 p.m.

The evening Sick Call is primarily intended for campers who need to take bedtime medications. **All scheduled medications must be administered before 10:00 p.m.**

Of course, campers who are feeling seriously ill, are injured, or need immediate attention should visit the Clinic right away rather than waiting for a scheduled Sick Call.

FEVER AND CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS

Because campers live, eat, and participate in activities together, we take precautions to help prevent the spread of illness throughout camp.

Our medical staff responds promptly to symptoms that may indicate a contagious illness, including fever, persistent coughing, and other concerning symptoms.

Campers with a temperature above 100.4°F will be temporarily removed from camp activities while their symptoms are evaluated and treated. Parents or guardians will be notified.

These precautions help protect the health of your camper, their cabinmates, and the entire camp community.

SUNSCREEN AND LIP BALM

With so many wonderful outdoor activities, protecting campers from the Texas sun is an important part of staying healthy at camp.

We encourage all campers and staff to apply sunscreen every day and reapply it as needed throughout the day.

Campers are welcome to bring their own sunscreen, but Hermann Sons Life Camp also provides sunscreen for anyone who needs it. Sunscreen is available outside the Clinic and at the Dining Hall.

We also encourage campers to bring lip balm. For those who forget, lip balm or petroleum jelly (Vaseline) is available at the Clinic.

STAYING HYDRATED

Staying hydrated is especially important during our warm Texas summers! Drinking plenty of water helps campers stay healthy, feel their best, and enjoy all the activities camp has to offer.

All campers and staff are required to carry a water bottle with them throughout the day, from breakfast through dinner.

Our counselors and activity staff encourage campers to drink water regularly, especially during outdoor activities and periods of warm weather.

WATER BOTTLES AND REFILL STATIONS

To help every camper stay hydrated, Hermann Sons Life Camp provides each camper with a water bottle at the beginning of their session.

Throughout camp, we have conveniently located water refill stations equipped with large, 10-gallon water containers.

Campers are encouraged to refill their bottles frequently so they always have water available.

To maintain cleanliness and sanitation:

Water containers are sanitized twice daily and whenever they are refilled.

Refill stations are designed so that campers' water bottles do not come into contact with the dispensing faucets.

Our goal is to make drinking water easy, convenient, and part of every camper's daily routine.

A healthy camper is a happy camper! By working together to encourage good hydration, sun protection, and healthy habits, we can help every child make the most of their summer camp experience.

STAYING IN TOUCH

We know families enjoy staying connected with their campers! While camp is an opportunity to build independence and make new friends, a little encouragement from home can make the experience even more special.

EMAILING YOUR CAMPER

Families may email campers at **CAMPERS@hctc.net**. Messages are printed daily at 1:00 p.m. and delivered to campers.
Please use the following format in the subject line:
DORM NAME – CAMPER'S FIRST AND LAST NAME
Example: White Tail – Jane Smith
Emails received after 1:00 p.m. will be delivered the following day.
Emails received after 1:00 p.m. on Friday will not be delivered.
Please do not include attachments or photographs. Emails are printed in black and white only.

WRITING ENCOURAGING MESSAGES

Keep messages positive and focused on your camper's experiences! Ask about new friends, favorite activities, and exciting adventures. Let them know you're proud of them and encourage them to try new things.
Avoid emphasizing how much they're missed or describing exciting activities happening at home, as these messages can unintentionally increase homesickness. Reassure your camper that everything at home is fine and encourage them to enjoy their time at camp.
And a friendly reminder to brush their teeth, shower, and keep their cabin tidy never hurts!

CAMPER MAIL AND CARE PACKAGES

Families are welcome to send letters and care packages. The easiest way to ensure delivery is to bring them on arrival day and leave them at the designated mail drop-off station in the Dining Hall.
Clearly label each item with your **camper's name, dorm, and requested delivery day**.
Mail and packages are delivered after lunch during the daily rest and relaxation period.

CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Camp is a time to unplug, build friendships, and enjoy new experiences! Campers are not permitted to have cell phones or electronic devices, and phone calls to or from campers are not allowed during the session.
While homesickness is a normal part of camp, phone calls can make the adjustment more difficult. Our counselors are trained to help campers feel comfortable, included, and supported as they develop confidence and independence.
Any cell phones brought to camp will be collected by senior staff and securely stored in the camp office. Campers are responsible for retrieving their phones before leaving camp on departure day.
Thank you for helping us create a camp experience where children can focus on adventure, friendship, and making lasting memories!



HOMESICKNESS: LET'S PREPARE FOR A SUCCESSFUL SUMMER

HOMESICKNESS IS PART OF GROWING

TIP: Before your child's first summer at camp, encourage a few sleepovers with friends or family to help them become comfortable spending nights away from home.

We believe that experiencing homesickness can actually be one of the valuable benefits of overnight summer camp. **Homesickness isn't a bad thing!** It often means a child comes from a loving, comfortable home filled with family, familiar routines, favorite meals, and all the little comforts of everyday life. Of course they're going to miss those things!

One of the reasons parents choose summer camp is to give their children an opportunity to **grow, build confidence, make friends, and have fun in a safe, caring environment.** An important part of that growth is giving children the space to discover what they can accomplish on their own.

Camp isn't always perfect, and that's part of what makes it such a wonderful place to learn. Sometimes activities are challenging, friendships have their ups and downs, and things don't go exactly as planned. Learning to live in a cabin with as many as 30 other children, each with their own personality, teaches valuable lessons in cooperation, patience, problem-solving, and independence.

For some campers, especially those away from home for the first time, adjusting to camp can take a little time. **Most homesickness is temporary.** It may appear during a quiet moment, at bedtime, or during a meal, and often passes quickly as campers become involved in activities and develop friendships.

HOW WE HELP HOMESICK CAMPERS

Our counselors understand that adjusting to camp is different for every child. They provide encouragement, help campers become involved in activities, and create opportunities to make friends. Often, a new friendship or an exciting activity is just what a camper needs to begin feeling at home.

If your child experiences ongoing or significant homesickness, **we will contact you and keep you informed.** We may ask questions about your child's interests, friendships, and what helps them feel comfortable when facing new situations.

After all, you know your child better than anyone! Reaching out to parents for guidance isn't a sign that something has gone wrong. It's part of working together to help your camper have a successful experience.

TRUSTING YOUR CAMPER TO GROW

Sending your child to overnight camp is a big step, not just for them, but for you as well. You've taken the time to learn about Hermann Sons Life Camp, our programs, staff, safety procedures, and American Camp Association accreditation. You've made the decision to give your child this wonderful opportunity.

Now comes an equally important step: **showing your child that you believe in their ability to succeed.**

Sometimes camp is harder on parents than it is on campers! While you're wondering how your child is doing, they're surrounded by new friends, caring counselors, and activities that keep them busy from morning until evening.

A little homesickness is normal, and learning to work through it can be an important accomplishment. With encouragement, patience, and support, campers often discover that they're capable of much more than they imagined.

That's one of the greatest gifts of summer camp: helping children discover the confidence and independence they'll carry with them long after summer ends.



HELPING YOUR CAMPER SUCCEED

We understand that sending your child away to camp can be just as challenging for parents as it is for campers! It's natural to wonder how they're doing, whether they're making friends, and if they're having fun. **If you need a little reassurance, please don't hesitate to call us.** We also hope to share photos throughout the summer so families can catch a glimpse of camp life. After all, a picture really is worth a thousand words!

BEFORE CAMP BEGINS

Help your child prepare for camp by talking positively about the experience. Focus on the adventures they'll have, the friends they'll make, and the new things they'll learn.

Avoid statements such as "I don't know what I'll do without you" or "If you don't like it, we'll come pick you up." While well-intentioned, these messages can create uncertainty and make it more difficult for children to adjust.

Instead, let your child know that you believe in them and their ability to succeed.

SEND POSITIVE MESSAGES FROM HOME

Once camp begins, keep emails cheerful, encouraging, and focused on your child's experience.

Ask about new friends and favorite activities.

Tell them how proud you are of their growing independence.

Encourage them to try new things and enjoy every opportunity.

Remind them to brush their teeth, shower, and keep their cabin tidy!

Reassure them that everything at home is fine and they're not missing anything important.

These simple messages help reinforce confidence, independence, and a positive attitude toward camp.

AVOID PROMISING AN EARLY PICKUP

One of the most important things parents can do is avoid giving their child an "escape clause" before camp begins.

Telling a child, "Just try it for a day, and if you don't like it, I'll come get you," may sound reassuring, but it can unintentionally make adjusting to camp more difficult.

When a camper knows that going home is an immediate option whenever something feels uncomfortable, they may focus on leaving rather than working through the challenge. Even wonderful activities, caring counselors, and opportunities for new friendships may not be enough to change that expectation.

Instead, encourage your child to give camp a real chance. Remind them that feeling nervous, missing home, or having a difficult moment is normal. Encourage them to talk with their counselors, participate in activities, and allow themselves time to adjust.

Children need opportunities to try, stumble, learn, and try again in a safe, supportive environment. These experiences help develop courage, resilience, self-confidence, and independence.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Every camper experiences homesickness differently, and our staff understands that each child deserves individual attention, patience, and genuine care.

Our first priority is helping campers feel safe, supported, and included. Counselors work to create a welcoming cabin environment where children can connect with one another, participate in activities, and develop friendships.

Helping every camper make at least one good friend in their cabin is one of our most important goals. Friendships are often the greatest remedy for homesickness and one of the most meaningful parts of the camp experience.

By working together, parents and camp staff can give children the encouragement and space they need to grow.

Summer camp is more than a week of fun. It's an opportunity for children to discover who they are, what they're capable of, and the confidence to take on new challenges.

Hermann Sons Life Camp

CAMPER CODE OF CONDUCT

I WILL...

- Treat people the way I would to be treated.
- Cooperate with camp staff and follow their instructions.
- Practice sun safety by wearing: sunscreen throughout the day, protective clothing, a hat, stay hydrated with water/juice, and seek shade during the hottest/sunniest times of the day.
- Help keep my area and the surrounding environment clean and put all litter in the trashcans.
- Talk to someone if I feel unsafe
- Have lots of FUN and a GREAT time.

I WILL NOT...

- Bully, or put down other campers (includes knocking people's caps off).
- Steal, vandalize or graffiti any property.
- Deliberately hurt anybody's feelings.
- Hit other campers or staff.
- Use foul, inappropriate or abusive language.

CONSEQUENCES

- Re-directed and informed of expected behavior
- Parental notification.
- Possible dismissal from Camp.

SUMMER CAMP RULES

All campers and Cabin Staff will observe the following camp rules and grievance guidelines. The Executive Camp Director and VP of Member Benefits may add additional rules to accommodate the needs of the campers and camp. A violation by a camper will be handled by the Senior Counselor(s) or the State Fraternal Director, according to the seriousness of the matter.

- All campers must follow the camper Code Of Contract.
- All campers will participate in all scheduled activities.
- If a camper is late for a scheduled activity, it must be reported to the adult leader in charge.
- Campers will not be allowed to drive vehicles while at camp.
- Campers must follow directions of their Cabin Counselors.
- No one will be allowed to leave the campgrounds.
- Lights out will be observed - quiet!
- No boys in the girls' cabins and vice versa.
- No engaging in inappropriate physical or sexual behavior, disruptive or offensive to other members of the HSLC environment.
- No discourteous acts toward anyone. This includes disobeying a directive from staff, being disrespectful or directing profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures towards campers or staff.
- No hazing.
- No malicious or deliberate intent to do bodily harm (to self or others).
- No throwing anyone in any body of water.
- No tree climbing or rock throwing.
- No abusing camp property or equipment.
- No stealing.
- No selling, giving, possessing or using alcohol, tobacco products, vaping, illegal drugs, weapons, or fireworks.
- Proper camp attire and swimming suit must be modest/appropriate and will be enforced at all times
- Each camper will keep everything orderly around his/ her own bunk.
- Good sportsmanship and conduct will be observed at all times.
- No engaging in conduct constituting a felony as defined by law.
- All camp areas will be cleaned before leaving camp.
- Campers will be expected to pick up all litter on the grounds and inside the cabins.
- No visible body piercings other than ears. Clear spacers may be worn in place of jewelry.



CIT ADDENDUM

While the Counselor-in-Training (CIT) program is designed to grow future counselors (and possibly directors) for our program, it is primarily focused on helping our 15/16 year olds grow as individuals. The program is designed to help them learn leader- ship skills and responsibility. Responsibility for their actions and those of the campers with which they come into contact with.

Along with this leadership element, this program is designed to give our CITs campers, an insight into what it takes to be a counselor at camp. CIT campers will be given responsibili- ties throughout the week.

We are looking forward to our CITs interacting with the campers and providing a positive, smiling attitude. While we hope that our CITs create incredible friendships **within their peer groups,** they will be expected to **focus on the campers** when not in classes and their dorm.

Working at camp is **not just a fun, summer job (and it is fun!).** It is a great resume builder providing our staff with valu- able skills that are seldom attained by making coffee and copies in an office internship. Camp counselors make a real difference in the lives of the campers! This job has meaning! It's a real job that provides the counselor working in camp:

- **ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS** You will be required to communicate effectively with campers, fellow staff, supervi- sors and in many cases – parents!
- **CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING:** You will be challenged to think on your feet – from resolving camper disputes, health and safety issues to facilitating a group of campers in creating a skit!
- **INTERPERSONAL AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS:** You will be required to model professionalism and compassion by managing a group of campers, while contributing to the growth and development of each camper… YOU WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE in the LIVES of the campers.
- **COLLABORATIVE SKILLS:** You will receive real practical training on how to work in a team and help build and shape the culture and future of Hermann Sons Life.
- **CREATIVITY:** There is no more creative job than that of a camp counselor. How do you entertain and engage two to 200 campers?

There are also the benefits of working at camp. It is a real job.

- **LEADERSHIP** As mentioned before you will likely be super- vising between 7–15 up to 30 others, engaging in deci- sion-making, behavior management, and living ethics — all necessary leadership skills for today!
- **DIVERSE & GLOBAL EXPERIENCE** It is not uncommon for campers and staff to be from a variety of places and cultural perspectives from around the US and world.
- **NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES** With other staff and con- nections to camp alumni can provide a link to possible in- ternships or future job opportunities in a variety of careers.
- **TRAINING & CERTIFICATIONS** You get to keep any ad- ditional training you may acquire (like CPR, first aid, and activity specialist certifications) At Hermann Sons Life we provide free American Red Cross Lifeguard certificates, Ar- chery and Challenge Course certifications among others.
- **ROOM & BOARD** is provided if working at a resident camp. That means while working at camp you are not spending money on food (how much will that save parents!??), hous- ing, laundry, utilities, and other living expenses are covered.
- **21ST CENTURY SKILLS** Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Creativity, and Contribution that are criti- cal for success in today's world are developed and practiced daily at camp.
- **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** Ongoing professional development sets you up to learn about your job while building a strong team with the people you will be working with. There are many staff that assume greater responsibili- ties and promotions from year to year. What does that look like on a resume for future employers?
- **LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION** I write great letters of recommendation because I will have the opportunity to observe you closely over a number of years.
- **COLLEGE CREDIT OR INTERNSHIP** You may be eligible for college credit in some cases or able to use camp as an independent study, practicum, or internship experience. I've worked with many staff members who were allowed summer camp to be used as an internship or work study program.
- **PAYCHECK** You will typically get paid a salary. While the sal- ary is not what you can make at McDonalds or Burger King, there's no cost to you during the week. You're not buying food, or gas. You live and work at camp with new friends.

CLOTHING LIST

The clothing list is available in this Parent Handbook. A couple of highlights:

- CIT's are permitted their phones.
- They must be kept in their dorm and there will be limited time available for them to be used.
- If they permit campers to use their phone (siblings includ- ed) – they will be asked to leave camp immediately.
- CITs are permitted snacks in their dorms. They are never to be shared with campers (even siblings). This is very important!
- CIT-2s need a sleeping bag.

RULE OF THREE

No staff member, nor CIT should ever be alone with a camper where others cannot see. It is always important to remember that if you are taking a camper to the dorm to use the rest room – you stay outside while the camper enters the dorm to use the rest room.

Walking a camper to the clinic or the dorm is acceptable during the day because there is no expectation of privacy. Sitting on a camper's bed is acceptable (if invited) during relaxation time where there are many campers and staff in the immediate vicinity.